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Editor of the *Review*, will hardly claim that Schumann stole his ideas, twenty years before he conceived them! That two great minds should think alike, is probable; but it is unfortunate that one should so long antedate the other, as to raise serious doubts, as to the perfect originality of the second.

Still, if the criticisms of the *Weekly Review* embody the opinions of really great men, though no longer in the land of the living, doctored up by smaller modern men, they will have a value, which will entitle them to some respect in the future. Robbing the dead, however, is not a very creditable employment.

### HECTOR BERLIOZ REGRETTING HIS PAST CAREER.

The infatuated Munchausen who writes from Paris to the *N. Y. Weekly Review*, makes as great a fool of Hector Berlioz, as he did of Rossini, when he made him say, that a certain piano sounded "like a nightingale in a thunder-storm," which, of course, Rossini never did say. He puts into the mouth of Berlioz, that giant of the Orchestra, the following idiotic words:—"If I had known such pianos thirty years ago, I probably should have composed for the piano only. This Steinway system gives you an entire orchestra, on a smaller scale, with all the advantages of the richest instrumentation."

To those who know anything of Berlioz, this preposterous puff made out of whole cloth, will afford a hearty and derisive laugh. Imagine Hector Berlioz, whose grasp of mind embraces in its idea an Orchestra of twelve hundred pieces, dwarfing his genius to the limits of a single instrument! Imagine his instrumental score of a piano piece, to be played by the piano alone! How mighty would be his grand *fortissimos*, of side drums, grande caisse, trombones, bombardons, gongs, cymbals, fifes, harps and stupendous orchestra as developed by that piano, with a "system," which Berlioz was the first to discover!! At the point of the grandest climax we can imagine his directions would be, "now jump up and throw yourself full length upon the key board!"

It is indeed to be regretted that Berlioz did not know this piano with "a system," in his early youth, for the world by this ignorance has been deprived of what would have been the greatest of all musical curiosities.

Berlioz somewhat qualifies his enthusiasm when he acknowledges that the piano is an orchestra "on a smaller scale," but then he dashes off again, wildly, saying that it possesses "all the advantages of the richest instrumentation!" We admit that a piano is an orchestra upon a "smaller scale," it being chiefly composed of one instrument of one quality of tone, and the similarity becomes more striking, when we remember that

an orchestra is composed of many instruments with different qualities of tone. To suppose that Berlioz would use the word instrumentation, in connection with a single instrument, is to suppose him what he is not—namely, a fool. The whole credit, and the application, must be awarded to the obtusely imaginative correspondent of our contemporary.

Having again quoted from the *Weekly Review*, we hasten to give it full credit for the article, and at the same time we are led to enquire, what class of readers the Editor supposes he is catering for, when he permits such pointless twaddle to appear in the columns of his paper.

(From Le Revue et Gazette Musicale.)

### WEHLI AND POZNANSKI AT THE PARIS EXPOSITION.

On Wednesday and Friday last, we, as well as many competent judges, were again able to confirm the unrivalled superiority of the Chickering American pianos, touched on those days by Messrs. James M. Wehli and Poznanski. M. J. Wehli is certainly one of the most remarkable pianists of these times. In hearing him our admiration becomes mixed with profound astonishment. He joins to the vehemence of Liszt, the grace of Prudent, and the neatness of Thalberg. Among other pieces of his composition, M. J. Wehli played his grand *Fataisies* of Faust and Norma, and variations on a popular English melody, *for the left hand alone*. This last piece is an unheard-of *tour de force*; the principal motif does not cease to ring, purely and calmly, over a thousand ornaments of an accompaniment, that makes the most skilful vertuose giddy. The crowd which filled the saloon of the musical section of the United States was not sparing in their bravos to the celebrated artist. The success of M. Poznanski was equally great. These gatherings are magnificent concerts. Several other pianos having been touched, after the last piece of M. J. Wehli, the public had the opportunity of being convinced that the advantage of volume and quality of sound remained incontestibly with the Chickering instruments.

We avail ourselves of this occasion to confirm again the exactitude of the information, which our last article contained, on the manufacture and the inventions of the celebrated house of Boston. A great deal has, for some time, been said on the subject of American pianos, on the system of *overstrung strings*, applied originally by a Russian manufacturer, and actually used in the United States by the manufacturers Dunham, Steck, Steinway, and others. We have spoken of the inconveniences of this system. Messrs. Chickering tried it in the construction of a certain number of their grand pianos; but they were obliged to give it up for these in-

struments, because this disposition of the strings compromised, in the highest degree, the evenness of the registers. Messrs. Chickering, it is true, cross the strings in *their square pianos only*, but in point of view of a regular manufacture this disposition is only possible on a circular plan, or the disposition upon a curved line of the hammers of eighty-five notes of the key-board, which is an invention of Messrs. Chickering. We give these technical indications to establish the truth in a debate which we have no intention to make degenerate into a polemic.

### MUSICAL REVIEW.

*Ten Beautiful Selections for the Cabinet Organ.* S. Brainerd & Sons, Cleveland, Ohio.

1. Reverie.....by Al. Lebeau.
2. Aubade.....by Al. Lebeau.
3. Tyrolienne.....by J. Leybach.
4. Valse Brilliant.....by J. Leybach.
5. Mazourka.....by L. Wely.
6. Fanfare.....by J. Lemmens.
7. L'Africaine—Fantasie.....by A. Miolan.

This collection is a very pleasing and welcome contribution to our repertoire of music for the parlor or cabinet organ. The compositions are very varied in their character; they are purely secular, and are intended both for practice and recreation. They are specially adapted to our modern, quick speaking organ, but care has also been given to the development of its fine *sostenuto* power, and the combination is pleasing and effective in the highest degree. The selections are by well-known authors, whose names will be recognized by the musical community, as a guarantee of excellence. Numbers 8, 9 and 10 have not appeared, but are now in press.

*Crispino e Comare.* Sextette transcribed pour le Piano, par Alfred H. Pense. Sheppard, Cottier & Co., Buffalo, N. Y.

This *quasi* Fantasia has been rendered very popular through the medium of its author, who has constantly played it in public, both in New York and through the country. It is a clever transcription; the introduction partakes of the true character of the *fantaisie*, containing brief foreshadowings of the subjects, cleverly worked through changes of key, which are both imaginative and effective. The main subject is clearly and effectively transcribed, but the second part of the subject is only half carried out, the other part being supplied by a series of brilliant passages, which really mean nothing, but which, if based upon or sustained by a continuance of the subject, would have been just the right thing in the right place. With this exception, the piece throughout is melodious, attractive, well-made, and winds up attractively. It is within the scope of moderately accomplished amateurs. It is dedicated to his friend, Herr Wilhelm von Dohn.

*Thou art not here!* Ballad, written and composed by J. Ernest Perring. C. H. Ditson & Co., 711 Broadway, N. Y.

Mr. Perring is one of our most agreeable song writers. His melodies are always graceful, flowing and tender, and if they are not always stamped with originality, they are so happily turned that we always receive them with pleasure. The ballad before us, which was written for, and sung very charmingly by Mr. S. P. Thatcher, is one of his smoothest

and most graceful efforts; it is refined and tender in sentiment, and is simply and effectively harmonized. We can commend it as equally suited to the concert-room or the drawing-room.

*Susan's Story.* Ballad by Claribel. C. H. Ditson & Co., N. Y.

Claribel, by a combination of simplicity and earnestness, assisted always by a lyric that tells a story, has touched the public heart both here and in England. She writes in the true old fashioned ballad style, the easy flow of the melody being the first consideration; the accompaniments are often thin and bad in harmony, and are unnecessarily subordinate to the melody. Some of Claribel's songs have the readily recognized ring of originality, and have justly won a wide spread popularity. *Susan's Story*, though certainly pretty, is not one of her happiest efforts. The melody is strained, poor in accent, and possesses no positive individuality. Still, the story is well told, and the music has a certain amount of sentiment, which will insure it a wide circulation.

*Motette, from Psalm LXXXVI.* — "*Bow down thine ear, O Lord!*" By John P. Morgan. S. Brainerd & Sons, Cleveland, Ohio.

Mr. J. P. Morgan published this Motette when he was President of the Oberlin Conservatory of Music, but he is now, we believe, a resident of this city. He is a skillful and sterling organist, and is, as this composition will prove, an excellent and conscientious musician. This Motette is divided into three movements, and closes with a Fugue. The first movement is an *andante*, in C minor, of a grave, imploring character, in which the bass voice leads off, followed by the other voices in excellent counterpoint. It is finely harmonized, the suspensions aiding the effect, sustaining the sentiment and enriching the harmony. The second movement in A flat, "*Give ear, O Lord,*" is for a male quartette, and for a mixed choir. It is not strictly in eight parts, for the two quartettes have simply alternate answering phrases. The effect of this arrangement is both solemn and beautiful, the answering of the female voices at a higher pitch, has a lifting effect which is very telling. This movement is good in conception, and rich in harmony; the subject is gravely melodious, and the well worked up *crescendo*, towards its close, is very effective.

The third movement, *Allegro Maestoso* in E flat, presents a bold, bright subject, which is strengthened by vigorous counterpoint, and a just, emphatic treatment of the words. The reproduction of the third subject in C major, through a group of chromatic transitions from B minor, is effected without any effort, and is very effective by contrast with the clear, bold subject it introduces. The movement with which the Motette concludes is a clear, bold Fugue on the Tonic, which, in keeping with the character of the work, is ably and effectively treated, and the long suspensions at the close, afford a sufficient check to the natural impetus of the movement to present a grand and imposing ending.

It is a work of very high merit, showing knowledge and invention, and a familiar acquaintance with the art of voicing. We are much impressed with its beauties and its excellence, and we shall be glad to know more of Mr. John P. Morgan's writings, for from this example, we are satisfied that there is superior merit, which we should be glad

to recognize. The Motette is dedicated to Otis B. Boise, Esq.

"*Darling, Slumber on.*" Poetry by Arthur Matthison. Music by William K. Bassford, op. 42.

This is a full-grown "*Slumber Song*," that is, it is addressed to a lovely maiden, and not to an infant in arms. It is a vocal gem; flowing, graceful and tender in melody, and rich in its distribution of harmony. It breathes a beautiful sentiment throughout, and that refinement of thought which distinguishes all Mr. Bassford's compositions. Its construction is excellent; its passing modulations are achieved without destroying the sweet simplicity of the movement, and the introduction of the subject in the accompaniment towards the close—the voice taking the contrary motion—is both artistic and effective. It is altogether a charming song, and should meet with a large circulation. The poem is also very pleasing. It is dedicated to that talented young artist, Miss Kate McDonald.

#### ART MATTERS.

"How are we to reform the National Academy?" is a question which just at present agitates many an artistic breast, and is the cause of much heart-burning and bitter re-creation. That the Academy is, to a great extent, badly managed is a fact that few, with the exception perhaps of those in the "ring," will deny; but that it is as badly managed as many of the disaffected ones would make out cannot, I think, be clearly proven upon a closer scrutiny of the affairs of the institution.

In the first place, the National Academy is supposed, principally through its Fellowship Fund, to be possessed of great wealth. This it is not. The Fund is a large, a magnificent one, but the Academy can but use its yearly income, which barely covers the current expenses of the institution—in fact does not cover them, for the receipts of the annual exhibition have to be employed to make up the deficit; these receipts, at present, do not average \$25 a day. In this state of affairs it is manifestly impossible to maintain the art schools with that degree of liberality which they otherwise would be. At present there are no permanent instructors, a fact which has called forth a vast deal of abuse from the daily journals. But are the writers of these articles thoroughly conversant with the pecuniary affairs of the institution? Evidently not; for had they been so these firebrands would not have been thrown into the art world; unless, indeed, they are hurled by the hand of malice, rather than wisdom, good feeling, and a desire for the advancement of American art. As it is, many of the artists spend a great portion of their time at the schools giving gratuitous advice and instruction, but it is not to be expected of them, and no reasoning person has any right to expect, that they will devote *all* their time

to this one object; in this work-a-day, every-one-for-himself world, artists must struggle and strive with the rest of mankind for their daily bread; the majority of them are by no means heavily laden with this world's goods, and no one has a right to demand that they should sacrifice their time and labor to art instruction to the detriment of their own pecuniary prospects. The time of an artist is as valuable to him, even from the lowest stand-point—money, as is that of the mechanic, and surely much more so to the educated and enlightened portion of the community whom he leads forth into an artificial world of poetry and beauty, bringing man into closer communication with God and Nature by the imagery of his mind and the skill of his hand.

The Academy furnishes spacious, well-lighted rooms, and valuable models. Surely, then, the student, if he have the feeling of art in him, will be inspired by these noble counterparts of the grand old masters to do good things. Instructors may be necessary to point out to him the technical difficulties. These instructors he has. Gentlemen who sacrifice their own time for his benefit, and receive in return—thanks? No; abuse. There is no *regular* instructor. Here is a fine chance for the newspapers to twaddle. They twaddle. For shame! Gentlemen editors; Heaven knows art needs all the encouragement it can get in this country, and the National Academy, its acknowledged representative, should be treated kindly instead of having the venomous shafts of unjust criticism hurled against its walls with malevolent virulence.

Of the management of the annual exhibitions more can be justly said in the way of censure. There are, unquestionably, glaring cases of injustice and favoritism. But, after all, these are not confined to our National Academy; from England, France, in short, the whole art world, we hear the same complaints. Good pictures "*in the skies*," bad ones on "*the line*." From France we hear these mutterings to a less degree; as there the sensible plan of a "*government hanging committee*," explained at length in these columns some time since, is in vogue and gives general satisfaction;—or, rather, *was*; for the artists have found that their pictures are safest in the hands of their brother artists;—and even were they discontented, there is still the recourse of the second "*hanging committee*" of amateurs, directed by a professional. Why not adopt this plan here? It is eminently democratic, and must perforce, silence the voice of discontent. Let the coming Fall exhibition witness its inauguration, and my word for it, gentlemen of the Council, you will hear less grumbling and see far better exhibitions.

The present exhibition is fertile in cases of